



*County of Sonoma*  
**FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

FIRE SERVICES \* EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT \* HAZARDOUS MATERIALS



MARK ASTON, DIRECTOR/FIRE CHIEF

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Contact: Zachary Hamill  
(707) 565-1152

**Tsunami Warning Communications Test Occurring March 27<sup>th</sup> in Sonoma County**

**Sonoma County, CA ~ March 20, 2013 ~** Sonoma County is conducting a test of local tsunami warning communications systems on March 27 between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m as part of Tsunami Awareness Week, which is March 24-30, 2013,. The test is a cooperative effort between National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the California Emergency Management Agency and local emergency management agencies in the coastal counties of California.

Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services Department is coordinating a test of the airborne public address system and the Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS).

For the test of the airborne messaging system, a Civil Air Patrol aircraft will fly over the Sonoma County coastline. The slow flying public address system should provide persons on the ground with an informational message on where to provide feedback on the test. Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works will be placing roadside message boards to notify residents and visitors of the test. The flyover also includes Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino and Marin counties.

"The airborne messaging system and TENS are vital ways to ensure the public knows where to go and what to do during an emergency such as a tsunami," said Christopher Helgren, Emergency Manager for Sonoma County.

TENS will call residents within the areas which could be impacted by a tsunami and where the flyover is being conducted. This test will be the first large scale test of TENS upgraded hardware and software.

"Such tests allow us to check our systems, train our personnel and evaluate our ability to communicate with the public in preparation for any emergency we might face," said Mark Aston, Sonoma County Fire Chief.

To avoid confusion with an actual tsunami warning the test will be canceled if there is excessive seismic activity 24 hours prior. Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services Department are inviting the public to provide feedback online at [weather.gov/test](http://weather.gov/test).

NOAA's West Coast and Alaska Tsunami Warning Center website <http://wcatwc.arh.noaa.gov>, offers complete information, including the current status of tsunami watches, warnings and advisories. A list of frequently asked tsunami questions and answers can be found at <http://wcatwc.arh.noaa.gov/?page=tsunamiFAQ>.

For more information, please contact Emergency Coordinator Zachary Hamill before the event at (707) 565-1152. If you have questions the day of the event, please contact Emergency Manager Christopher Helgren at (707) 565-1152.

###